

## Programme Specification

<b>1.</b>	<b>Programme title</b>	MA Virtual Production MA Virtual Production with Professional Placement
<b>2.</b>	<b>Awarding institution</b>	Middlesex University
<b>3a</b>	<b>Teaching institution</b>	Middlesex University: London
<b>3b</b>	<b>Language of study</b>	English
<b>4a</b>	<b>Valid intake dates</b>	September
<b>4b</b>	<b>Mode and duration of study</b>	FT – 1 year FT with Professional Placement – 2 years PT – 2 years PT with Professional Placement – 3 years
<b>4c</b>	<b>Delivery method</b>	On-campus
<b>5.</b>	<b>Professional/Statutory/Regulatory body (if applicable)</b>	N/A
<b>6.</b>	<b>Apprenticeship Standard (if applicable)</b>	N/A
<b>7.</b>	<b>Final qualification(s) available</b>	MA Virtual Production MA Virtual Production with Professional Placement PGDip Virtual Production PGDip Virtual Production with Professional Placement PGCert Creative Technologies
<b>8.</b>	<b>Academic year effective from</b>	2026/27

## **9. Criteria for admission to the programme**

### **Appropriate qualifications or experience:**

- We celebrate inclusivity and diversity and welcome applicants without the normal qualifications but who have extensive and substantial work experience in appropriate fields.
- A good undergraduate degree (normally a 2:2 or better) in a subject-specific or related design subject, or a recognised, equivalent professional qualification.
- Applicants with a good undergraduate degree in an unrelated subject but with substantial professional experience within fields such as Film, TV, VFX, 3D Animation, Game Art programme discipline, and able to demonstrate an aptitude for working in the subject at postgraduate level.
- In all cases, admission to the programme is dependent on:
  - evidence of subject-related knowledge and skills, and of critical subject engagement, demonstrated through an annotated digital portfolio of relevant academic and professional work submitted in a suitable format.
  - sufficient command of the English language. Applicants for whom English is not their first language must provide evidence of attainment to an IELTS overall score of 6.5 (with 6.0 in each component), or equivalent qualification.
  - at least 1 supportive academic, and/or where relevant, professional reference.

The University aims to ensure that its admissions processes are fair, open and transparent and aims to admit students who, regardless of their background, demonstrate potential to successfully complete their chosen programme of study where a suitable place exists and where entry criteria are met. The University values diversity and is committed to equality in education and students are selected on the basis of their individual merits, abilities and aptitudes. The University ensures that the operation of admissions processes and application of entry criteria are undertaken in compliance with the Equality Act.

We take a personalised but fair approach to how we make offers. We feel it's important that our applicants continue to aspire to achieving great results and make offers which take into account pieces of information provided to us on the application form. This includes recognition of previous learning and experience. If you have been working, or you have other learning experience that is relevant to your course, then we can count this towards your entry requirements and even certain modules once you start studying.

## **10. Aims of the programme**

This MA prepares critically reflective practitioners to work across the technical and creative aspects of Virtual Production. Students will design, prototype and deploy hybrid, real and virtual film sets to realise their own creative vision as well as that of other practitioners. Students will explore current, state-of-the-art and future Virtual Production workflows and analyse their effectiveness for different scenarios from low-budget independent productions to high end Film and TV. Students gain advanced competence in Virtual Production tools and engines through studying the theoretical basis of the art as well as practical studio-based workshops. Students will develop an ethical approach to their work framed by Middlesex's commitment to sustainable, inclusive and audience-centred practice.

## **11. Programme learning outcomes**

### **A. Knowledge and understanding**

On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding through:

1. Develop a systematic and critical response to theories of scene making, cinematography, and film studies to inform virtual production design.
2. Organize specialist techniques around production digital assets, asset pipelines, and technical workflows for developing high resolution real time virtual locations for key development milestones
3. Formulate and test prototypes for virtual locations that use the appropriate technologies from paper to 3D immersive XR
4. Integrate ethical, accessibility and data-privacy principles across the virtual production and film lifecycle.
5. Critically appraise global market trends to innovate game products for commercial and social value.

### **B. Skills**

On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to:

1. Independently design and test agile pipelines aligning virtual production development, optimisation, and maintenance for on set use.
2. Experiment with emerging technologies including AI tools and agents to build better virtual locations and pipelines.
3. Negotiate your role in a multidisciplinary team through interpersonal skills and reflective and inclusive practice showing independent ownership of quality goals in your discipline.
4. Use advanced communication techniques to convey complex virtual production plans and concepts to specialist and non-specialist stakeholders.
5. Reflect critically on personal practice to sustain lifelong professional growth.

## **12. Teaching/learning methods**

Students learn skills through a combination of interactive seminars, experiential activities, work in progress crits, and practical workshop activities. In term 3 project supervision and project stand ups are used as part of the teaching and learning practice.

- Work in progress crits (show and tell) – showing work from the previous weeks independent study
- Weekly planning meetings (stand ups) – setting a plan for the rest of the weeks independent study

The process of work in progress crits and weekly planning meetings with individuals and groups are used to work with students to set priorities and work plans for each week that help structure and show case students independent study in the classroom.

<sup>1</sup> Approx. number of timetabled hours per week (at each level of study, as appropriate), including on-campus and online hours	FT 12	PT 6
Approx. number of hours of independent study per week (at each level of study, as appropriate)	FT 38	PT 19
Approx. number of hours on placement (including placement, work-based learning or year abroad, as appropriate). <i>Where relevant, provide further details under 13c below.</i>	FT 15	PT 15

### 13. Employability

#### 13a Development of graduate competencies

**Leadership and Influence:** When working on their Major Project, students are encouraged to direct a team of collaborators including fellow designers as well as game designers, animators, voice actors, composers and UX designers, allowing them to gain experience assembling and leading a large and diverse team of practitioners. The shared core module on business skills provides students with the skills needed to run their own business.

**Entrepreneurship:** Students engage in scaffolded pitching exercises, focussed on selling their ideas to an audience, including their peers, employers and external clients. In the shared core module on business skills, they are taught to take account of market dynamics, and consider the practicalities of operating as a freelancer and forming their own business

**Communication, Empathy, and Inclusion:** Group presentations, pitches and crits foster empathic, inclusive, and assertive soft skills essential for effective communication and collaboration. Seminars place an emphasis on understanding the unique potentials of virtual production to support, create, and communicate meaning, as well as its representative properties as they pertain to categories of identity like gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity, fostering a sense of empathy and inclusion which extends beyond their interpersonal soft skills and directly impacts their approach to their practice.

**Curiosity and Learning:** Modules stimulate curiosity by exposing students to a wide array of forms, genres and traditions of animation and film from around the world and throughout the medium's history. They are also asked to question the industry's received conceptions of how films and animations are made.

**Collaborative Innovation:** Students are encouraged to collaborate on projects across their own cohort and other disciplines. They are invited to innovate in service of producing experimental games to a set brief. In the Major Project module and the shared core modules, students are given opportunities to collaborate with those on other programmes, augmenting their practice via the participation of specialised practitioners and exposing them to the working practices of separate but complimentary disciplines.

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<sup>1</sup> This information will be used as part of our submission to Discover Uni (previously Unistats).

**Resilience and Adaptability:** Resilience and adaptability are explicitly addressed in all our specialist modules, each of which asks students to present pitches and works-in-progress in group crits, in which all students must participate in the review of one another's work. This emphasises the importance of constructive feedback and fostering trust in the learning environment. Students are encouraged to embrace challenges and iterate on their creative outputs, understanding that setbacks are part of the creative process.

**Technological Agility:** Students are supported throughout their studies to develop technological agility through a combination of practice and conceptualisation across various industry standard software tools. This equips them to navigate different tools comfortably and adapt to new ones efficiently. Students will be asked to critically assess the suitability of different software for confronting different tasks, problems and desired effects.

**Problem Solving and Delivery:** Right from the outset, students engage in problem-solving, learning to adapt and seek creative solutions to effectively communicate design ideas. Throughout their studies they learn and develop project management methodologies and tools to deconstruct tasks, prioritize, and schedule effectively, facilitating project delivery. Students are exposed to timekeeping and scheduling strategies used in industry, and through our robust feedback process and scheduled one-to-one tutorials with staff, they will be provided with the technological and intellectual toolkits necessary to solve practical and creative problems that arise throughout their creative projects.

### **13b Employability development**

The students will take one of three work experience modules (either 15 or 30 credits) and will have the opportunity to be placed on active productions through the MDX Studios scheme. Modules on business skills and AI also teach the students about the realities of working in the industry. Production pipelines on the pre-production and major project modules mimic real-world industry workflows.

### **13c Placement and work experience opportunities (if applicable)**

The students will take one of three work experience modules (either 15 or 30 credits) and will have the opportunity to be placed on active productions through the MDX Studios scheme.

### **13d Future careers / progression**

This programme is designed to help students target jobs in the various film and television sectors including Volume operator, Motion capture supervisor, Real-time compositor, Systems administrator, Systems technical director, LED engineer, Video engineer, Virtual camera operator, Virtual production supervisor, Visual effects supervisor, Engine operator, Data manager.

Graduate jobs beyond the games industry in Project Management, Software Development, or Systems Analyst Consultant

#### 14. Assessment methods

#### 15. Programme structure (level of study, modules, credits and progression requirements)

##### 15a Structure of the programme.

#### Full time structure

Semester 1	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 2	Semester 3
<b>Business Skills for Creative Practice</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Creative Practice and AI</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Storytelling and Worldbuilding</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>30 credits total from:</b> <b>Digital Prototyping</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Place Based Interaction</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Visual Effects with AI</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Sound Recording for Media</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Podcasting and Audio Storytelling</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Work Experience 1</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Work Experience 2</b> 30 credits Optional  <b>Work Experience 3</b> 15 credits Optional	<b>Major Project</b> 60 credits Compulsory
<b>Asset Development and Management</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Level to Virtual Location</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Virtual Production Cinematography</b> 15 credits Compulsory		

**Full time structure with Professional Placement**

Semester 1	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 2	Semester 3
<b>Business Skills for Creative Practice</b> 15 credits Compulsory  <b>Asset Development and Management</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Creative Practice and AI</b> 15 credits Compulsory  <b>Level to Virtual Location</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Storytelling and Worldbuilding</b> 15 credits Compulsory  <b>Virtual Production Cinematography</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>30 credits total from:</b>  <b>Digital Prototyping</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Place Based Interaction</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Visual Effects with AI</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Sound Recording for Media</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Podcasting and Audio Storytelling</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Work Experience 1</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Work Experience 2</b> 30 credits Optional  <b>Work Experience 3</b> 15 credits Optional	<b>Preparing for the Professional Placement</b> 0 credits Compulsory

Year 2

Semester 1	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 2	Semester 3
<b>Work Experience 5</b> 0 credits Optional  <b>Work Experience 4</b> 0 credits Optional		<b>Work Experience 4</b> 0 Credits Optional		<b>Major Project</b> 60 credits Compulsory

**Indicative Part time structure**

Year 1

Semester 1	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 2	Semester 3
<b>Asset Development and Management</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Creative Practice and AI</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Storytelling and Worldbuilding</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>15 credits total from:</b>  <b>Digital Prototyping</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Place Based Interaction</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Visual Effects with AI</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Sound Recording for Media</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Podcasting and Audio Storytelling</b> 15 credits Optional	

Year 2

Semester 1	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 2	Semester 3
<b>Business Skills for Creative Practice</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Level to Virtual Location</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Virtual Production Cinematography</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>15 credits total from:</b>  <b>Digital Prototyping</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Place Based Interaction</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Visual Effects with AI</b> 15 credits Optional	<b>Major Project</b> 60 credits Compulsory

			<b>Sound Recording for Media</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Podcasting and Audio Storytelling</b> 15 credits Optional	
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**Indicative Part time structure with Professional Placement**

Year 1

Semester 1	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 2	Semester 3
<b>Asset Development and Management</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Creative Practice and AI</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Storytelling and Worldbuilding</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>15 credits total from:</b>  <b>Digital Prototyping</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Place Based Interaction</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Visual Effects with AI</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Sound Recording for Media</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Podcasting and Audio Storytelling</b> 15 credits Optional	

Year 2

Semester 1	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 2	Semester 3
<b>Business Skills for Creative Practice</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Level to Virtual Location</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>Virtual Production Cinematography</b> 15 credits Compulsory	<b>15 credits total from:</b>  <b>Digital Prototyping</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Place Based Interaction</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Visual Effects with AI</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Sound Recording for Media</b> 15 credits Optional  <b>Podcasting and Audio Storytelling</b> 15 credits Optional	<b>Preparing for the Professional Placement</b> 0 credits Compulsory

Year 3

Semester 1	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 2	Semester 3
<b>Work Experience 5</b> 0 credits Optional				<b>Major Project</b> 60 credits Compulsory
<b>Work Experience 4</b> 0 credits Optional		<b>Work Experience 4</b> 0 Credits Optional		

<b>15b Levels and modules</b>		
<b>Compulsory (Core)</b>	<b>Optional (Elective)*</b>	<b>Progression requirements</b>
Business Skills for Creative Practice	Digital Prototyping	Students must pass at least 90 credits before progressing to the Major Project module.
Ethical Creative Practice and AI	Place based interaction	
Storytelling & Worldbuilding	Visual Effects with AI	Students on the Professional Placement (2 year) version of the programme must pass at least 90 credits before progressing onto the Professional Placement module(s) (ACI4421 or ACI4422).
Virtual Production Cinematography	Sound Recording for Media	
Level to Virtual Location	Podcasting and Audio Storytelling	
Asset Development and Management	Work Experience 1	
Virtual Production Project	Work Experience 2	
	Work Experience 3	

\*Please refer to your programme page on the website re availability of option modules

<b>15c Non-compensatory modules</b>	
<b>Module level</b>	<b>Module code</b>

<b>16. Programme-specific support for learning</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction/orientation programmes for facilities</li> <li>• Academic advising</li> <li>• Direct communication with tutors and technicians via e-mail</li> <li>• Access to virtual learning environment &amp; learning support platform (My Learning) to support tutor/learner interaction</li> <li>• Technical staff</li> <li>• Programmes of visiting external speakers from industry</li> <li>• MDX Studios initiative providing access to industry professionals and real-world productions</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the academic and technical staff aligned to the programme, students are supported in their learning by staff in Library Resources as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Resources, e.g., specialist books, journals, videos, DVDs, slides, special collections (including electronic versions)</li> <li>• Online reading lists for each module accessible via My Learning</li> <li>• Subject-dedicated librarian</li> <li>• Special induction sessions provided by the Library Resources</li> </ul>

<b>17. HECos code(s)</b>	100363 VFX 80% 100716 Cinematography 20%
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<b>18. Relevant QAA subject benchmark(s)</b>	<p><b>QAAHE Benchmark for Computing</b>  <a href="https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/sbs/sbs-computing-22.pdf">https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/sbs/sbs-computing-22.pdf</a></p> <p><b>QAA HE Benchmark for Art &amp; Design</b>  <a href="https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-art-and-design-17.pdf">https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-art-and-design-17.pdf</a></p>
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<b>19. University Regulations</b>
This programme will run in line with general University Regulations: <a href="#">Regulations for Taught programmes</a>

<b>20. Reference points</b>
<p>UK Screen Skills virtual production hub  <a href="https://www.screenskills.com/your-career/virtual-production/virtual-production-competencies/">https://www.screenskills.com/your-career/virtual-production/virtual-production-competencies/</a></p> <p>Visual Effects Society  <a href="https://www.vesglobal.org/virtual-production-resources/">https://www.vesglobal.org/virtual-production-resources/</a></p>

<b>21. Other information</b>

Please note programme specifications provide a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information about the programme can be found in the rest of your programme handbook and the university regulations.

## 22. Curriculum map for MA Virtual Production

### 22a Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding	
A1	Develop a systematic and critical response to theories of scene making, cinematography, and film studies to inform virtual production design.
A2	Organize specialist techniques around production digital assets, asset pipelines, and technical workflows for developing high resolution real time virtual locations for key development milestones
A3	Formulate and test prototypes for virtual locations that use the appropriate technologies from paper to 3D immersive XR
A4	Integrate ethical, accessibility and data-privacy principles across the virtual production and film lifecycle.
A5	Critically appraise global market trends to innovate game products for commercial and social value.
Skills	
B1	Independently design and test agile pipelines aligning virtual production development, optimisation, and maintenance for on set use.
B2	Experiment with emerging technologies including AI tools and agents to build better virtual locations and pipelines.
B3	Negotiate your role in a multidisciplinary team through interpersonal skills and reflective and inclusive practice showing independent ownership of quality goals in your discipline.
B4	Use advanced communication techniques to convey complex virtual production plans and concepts to specialist and non-specialist stakeholders.
B5	Reflect critically on personal practice to sustain lifelong professional growth.

Programme learning outcomes

A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
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Highest level achieved by all graduates

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## 22b Mapping by level of study and module

Module Title	Module Code by Level of study	A 1	A 2	A 3	A 4	A 5	B 1	B 2	B 3	B 4	B 5
Creative Practice and AI	ACI4402				X			X			
Worldbuilding and Storytelling	ACI4401	X				X					
Business Skills for Creative Practice	ACI4403					X			X		
Level to Virtual Location	VPR4000			X			X	X			X
Virtual Production Cinematography	VPR4001	X			X					X	
Asset Development and Management	GAM4005		X				X				
Major Project	VPR4050	X	X	X		X		X		X	X
<b>Optional Modules:</b>											
Visual Effects with AI	VFX4000		X		X			X		X	
Digital Prototyping	GAM4002			X		X			X		X
Place-based Interaction	GAM4004	X		X				X		X	
Sound Recording for Media	MUS4105										
Podcasting and Audio Storytelling	MUS4109										
Work Experience 1	ACI4410	X	X			X					X
Work Experience 2	ACI4411	X	X			X					X
Work Experience 3	ACI4412	X	X			X					X